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ABSTRACT

This book synthesizes over 100 autobiographical accounts by American Indians recalling their schooling in government and missionary institutions. From 1850 to 1930, such schools were established or supported by the federal government to "civilize" Indian children through acculturation. Chapters cover: (1) the use of autobiographical material in validating the educational experiences of American Indians; (2) the cyclical nature of traditional tribal education in preserving Native culture; (3) Indian schooling in the English colonies, including an outline of missionary and government educational policies and practices in the 19th and 20th centuries that were designed to break the cycle of traditional tribal education; (4) why Indians began to attend school and the extent to which they did so willingly; (5) student responses to the institutional sides of the missionary and government school, home, and White society; and (6) the pleasures and difficulties of returning home following completion of education. Autobiographical responses indicate that Indian students responded to an alien educational institution with a high degree of ambivalence. Narrators' accounts of their school experiences are highly consistent with each other and with contemporary White American sources, thus providing a credible understanding of schooling during the decades under review. This book contains over 350 references, photographs, an index, and a list of narrators' tribes. (LP)

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